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Westmorland Election,

1818.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

AT

Appleby,

From SATURDAY, the 27th of JUNE,

TO THE

Final Close of the Poll,

PRINTED BY RICHARD LOUGH, FINKLE-STREET, KENDAL.

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Westmorland Election.

ON Saturday, the 27th June, preparations for this Election began to be manifested in Appleby. The Hustings, Polling Booths, and the Booths for administering the Oaths were erected, and the respective Candidates, and some of their Agents and Friends arrived. Mr. BROUGHAM and Lord Colonel LOWTHER, who happened to meet on the Hustings, respectively addressed the crowd which had been collected by their appearance. The former referred to the recent events at the Cumberland Election. On the Sunday, and even during the night, as well as early on the Monday morning, several post-chaises began to arrive. In the course of Monday the streets began to assume an appearance of bustle, and the partisans of the Lowthers and those of the Independent Cause began to parade the street, decorated with the colours of their parties. In the forenoon a band of Music, engaged by the Lowthers, with large yellow ensigns, and with the Performers dressed in yellow, paraded the street, playing different tunes. The persons who were denominated Special Constables, began to be seen with their Bludgeons. Tents and straw were provided for them in a field (between the Grammar School and the Eden) belonging to Lord Lonsdale, and they were carefully preserved from any contact with the Blues by the Magistrates—adherents of the Lowther party. Some Gentlemen who attempted to enter the place where they were kennelled, were ordered to quit the field by the Magistrates, who professed that by keeping the Constables separate from both parties, which they declared they would do, they should secure a dispassionate administration of justice by these chosen supporters of the law. The Gentlemen to whom this observation was directed, observed, that there appeared to be some persons with yellow favours in the field,—a fact which seemed to shew that the Magistrates had been rather partial interpreters of the law which they had made, and they also resisted any pretended right which the Magistrates assumed, of preventing them from seeing or speaking to the Constables or any other men. The Magistrate now shifted his position, and told them that they had no right to enter that field, because it was the private property of the Earl of Lonsdale. He did not, however, say how he reconciled this, viz. his assuming, as an agent of Lord Lonsdale, to drive

trespassers from this field, with his assertions that the Constables were stationed there to secure their impartiality. The Gentlemen accordingly left the field. In this field these Constables were regularly drawn out and mustered under the direction of a person who was said to be a Bow-street Officer. Further to shew the impartial character of these Constables, we must observe, that they were frequently carried into the house opposite the Hustings and other inns opened for the Lowther party, and a hand-bill was issued to allay the alarm that they would occasion an enormous county-rate, by declaring that they would not be paid out of any *public* fund. What was the number of these gentry it is difficult to ascertain—the adherents of the Lowthers confessed to 450, and some to 500—but that there were many more is conjectured from this circumstance:—They had printed tickets, numbered from one upwards, by which numbers they were called over. One of these printed tickets was found in the field before-mentioned after they had quitted their encampment, torn into five pieces, probably by the man who had formerly held it. It ran thus—

**SPECIAL
CONSTABLE,
No. 697.**

How many more than 697 there were, it would not be easy to say.

In the early part of Monday, the friends of the Lowthers, including the Constables, seemed to exceed the Blues in number. No expence had been spared in conveying them to the place of Election in post-chaises, coaches, and other expeditious conveyances, and it seemed determined that they should pre-occupy the place of Election. Towards the afternoon, the appearance of the relative numbers of the two parties began to be changed; the friends of the Independent Cause, who, as they were urged only by a desire to do their duty, did not wish unnecessarily to lose their time, now arrived in great numbers—some on foot, others on their own horses. About half past five o'clock the approach of the body from Kendal was announced, and Mr Brougham went some distance from the town to meet them. This truly respectable Procession soon after arrived, led by Mr. Thomson, who had set the example of walking to Appleby. The Voters on foot were followed by several of the Yeomanry on horseback, and the cavalcade was followed

by some carriages, which conveyed some of the infirm, and which had occasionally assisted those who were fatigued by their journey. This body proceeded through the main street, round the Hustings to the pillar opposite to the Castle Gate, where Mr. Brougham addressed his friends in terms of deserved praise for this effort in behalf of their Independence,—the spectacle which they then exhibited, so cheering to all friends of Freedom,—and the example which they had set, so new in the annals of Elections, but yet so worthy of imitation.—It was gratifying that they had redeemed their pledge to him,—that they had not come like Ladies and Gentlemen taking an airing, but they had come on foot like men, willing to make some exertions to recover their rights. He informed them of the steps which had been taken by their opponents—especially the enrollment of Bludgeon-men. He exhorted them to keep the peace in spite of any irritation, unless they were attacked—but if they should be attacked, it was their right and duty to shew the aggressors the bottom of the river. Mr. Brougham's address was received with enthusiasm, and the Voters dispersed to their different quarters. In the course of the afternoon, J. G. Lambton, Esq. M. P. for the County of Durham, Mr. Baker, of Durham, Lord Molyneux, Mr. Langton, Mr. James, of Barrock Lodge, and several other Gentlemen, friends of Mr. Brougham, had entered the town, and soon after the entrance of the Kendal Procession, dined with the Candidate at the Castle.

About seven o'clock the Voters in the cause of Independence, from Windermere, Grassmere, and the other adjoining districts arrived. They too had performed the long and tiresome journey from Ambleside,—a distance of 33 or 4 miles, mostly on foot. They were led by Mr. King and Mr. Crump, on horseback. Mr. Brougham also met them, and welcomed them to Appleby in an address, in which he mentioned some of the facts which he had before stated to the men of Kendal. He also observed to them, that they had come from a neighbourhood in which some persons were in the habit of writing much in prose as well as in other compositions—not prose—and which he wished he could call poetry. These persons, who had been raised from a condition little above that of paupers to affluence which they had no reason to expect, by means of sinecure places and pensions, had now in their elevation discovered, that not only their own former poverty, but that even a moderate fortune, was quite incompatible with political honesty and political wisdom.

He hoped these Gentlemen would be as honest now when rich, as they had been in their honourable poverty, but the men of Ambleside and those who accompanied them would at least shew them, that there was as much honesty of spirit to be found among the Yeomanry of Westmorland, as among those who wallowed in wealth—even though they drew it from the Public Purse.

Mr. Brougham's speech was listened to with the spirit which such an occasion was calculated to excite, and the crowd separated after repeated cheers.

THE FIRST DAY.—(TUESDAY).

All the arrangements had been made for the commencement of the Poll. The Hustings were placed across the street opposite to the Countess of Pembroke's Hospital. The four Polling Booths were lower down, on the left hand, arranged in this order—Kendal, Lonsdale, West, East; the Kendal booth being nearest to the Hustings. The place fixed for the Sheriff's Assessor, before whom the disputed votes were decided on, was the Chapel of the Countess of Pembroke's hospital. John Heywood, Esq. Chairman of the Wakefield Quarter Sessions, was the Assessor.—Mr. Maude was the Counsel for Mr. Brougham; the Counsel for the Lowthers were Mr. Warren, Mr. Raincock, Mr. Courtenay, and one or two others. The streets now became more and more crowded, and the multitude was soon concentrated in front of the Hustings.

At nine o'clock the different Candidates and their friends came to the Hustings, accompanied by bands of Music. Shortly after Mr. Briggs, the Under-Sheriff, came forward, and read the Writ directed to him, and the Act against Bribery and Corruption, and then called on any Freeholder who wished to propose a Candidate to come forward.

Mr. Hasell, of Dalemain, then addressed the Freeholders, and shortly proposed Lord Viscount Lowther.

Mr. Wilson, of Casterton, seconded the nomination, and said that the Freeholders were now assembled peaceably and orderly together, to exercise a great constitutional privilege, and he trusted from the quiet which then prevailed, that the public peace would be preserved during the whole of the Election. They had now to deliberate on one of the most important ques-

tions which came under their consideration as freemen or subjects, namely, by whom should be regulated the concerns of this great Country. It was on the wisdom of Parliament and the uprightness of our Rulers, that the property of the Kingdom depended, and it was their duty to make their choice, with this sense of its importance upon their minds. We had now ended an eventful war by a prosperous peace—after a long pull, a strong pull, and, he wished he could say, a pull altogether (*some applause*); he was aware that different sentiments prevailed in this as well as in other free countries on public affairs, but he hoped they would agree to differ as friends. He, therefore, did not find fault with the opposition to his Majesty's Ministers, but he would say, that the wisdom of their councils had preserved the country from the greatest tyranny which had ever afflicted mankind, and through their measures we had arrived to the greatest height of opulence and prosperity. He detested war, but when we had been attacked it was necessary we should be defended, and we *had* defended ourselves with such success as to establish not only our own independence, but the independence (*such as it was*) of the rest of Europe. The steady conduct of the illustrious family to which Lord Lowther belonged, had done much towards this end. Something had been said, and truly, of two sons of one family representing the same County—these Representatives being the sons of a Nobleman. It was the principle of the Constitution that every man who had integrity and talents might reach the highest honor of the State. Suppose, for instance, the Learned Gentleman, who, he understood, was to be proposed as a Candidate for the other side, should by the exercise of his great talents, reach the situation of Lord Chancellor, he would probably be created a Peer of the Realm. If he then had sons arrived at an age of maturity, who had the talents which fitted them for the office of Representatives, was it not fit that the County should confide in them as well as in their noble father? Much had been said on Independence, but was Independence all on one side? (*Yes, from the Crowd*). He did not blame the independent men who wore different colours from his own; on the contrary, he honoured them, but he would ask, were not the Country Gentlemen whom he saw around him independent also? He never arrogated independence to one side only, he believed there was much on both sides. Something, too, had been said respecting property. Every man by his industry might acquire as much property as the richest indivi-

qual in the County; but what would be the consequences if the quiet possession of property was not secured to the person who has by his industry obtained it? It was the security of property which created that union between high and low, which existed more beautifully in this than in any other country. Having answered what he conceived to be the objection to the election of Lord Lowther, he concluded by seconding his nomination.

Mr. Wilson, of Abbot Hall, then proposed Colonel Lowther.

Colonel Maude seconded the nomination. After confessing his inability to do justice to the subject, he professed that he came forward from no mercenary motives—he seconded Colonel Lowther's nomination from the conviction of his amiable qualities and his abilities. Colonel Lowther had not been brought up in idleness, he had served under the great Wellington, and had been engaged in much active service. Since that time he had an opportunity of attending to his Parliamentary duties, and he now proposed him as a gallant soldier, as a gentleman of education and high rank, and nearly allied to that noble family whose interests were so closely connected with those of the County of Westmorland.

Mr. Wybergh then came forward amidst considerable applause. He congratulated his brother Freeholders, sincerely, that the day had arrived, on which they would enjoy the long-wished-for opportunity of giving their votes to a candidate of their own.—Hitherto, they had only Hobson's choice (*a laugh*); they had, now, a choice of their own, and he congratulated the Noble Lord and his Hon. brother, in whose praise so much had been said, that they too, would be taught the difference between the nomination of a Lord Lieutenant, and the election of the unbiassed Freeholders, at large—(*Applause*) But, most of all, he congratulated his learned friend on his right, on the triumph which was prepared for him—(*Applause*.) Under the auspices of this approbation, he had the honour to propose, that Henry Brougham, Esq. be chosen one of the Knights of the Shire, to serve in Parliament for the County of Westmorland—(*Great applause*) It was totally unnecessary for him to add another syllable, though he had quite as much room to enlarge upon the public merits of Mr Brougham, as those who had proposed Colonel and Lord Lowther had, in the good qualities of those gentlemen, which he neither intended nor was inclined to depreciate.—He agreed in one thing with Mr. Wilson, of Casterton, that at some time or other his learned friend might be appointed Lord Chancellor;

this hope was a little premature—but he would tell them what his learned friend was, and what he was not, without fear of contradiction.—His learned friend was not a Courtier, he was not the son of a Lord Lieutenant—he was not the son of a Peer of Parliament—he was not the heir apparent to large estates, or modern built castles—(*a laugh.*) He was a private Westmorland gentleman, descended from a respectable family, long resident in the county, and though not heir apparent to a modern built castle, was in actual possession of one of the most beautiful seats in the County—(*a laugh.*) He confessed, that had these been his only claims to consideration, many other gentlemen on the hustings could advance equal ones.—But where could they find the man with his transcendent abilities—where could they find a man with his commanding eloquence—with his indefatigable activity—with half his political information on all those subjects which had been agitated in the last Parliament, and which would be agitated in the next. (Cries of “No where.”)—This was not all. In addition to these splendid talents, to that unremitting industry and profound political information, his learned friend added a peculiarly acute discernment and independence of spirit, which, to use the language of the famous Countess of Pembroke, made it impossible that he should be cajoled by a Courtier, or bullied by a Minister—(*applause.*) He would not have it supposed, that this was a mere personal question as to the comparative merits of two Candidates—it was a question of infinitely more importance—it was whether the County of Westmorland should be free or hold by arbitrary tenure?—it was whether the elective franchise should be exercised by the Freeholders, or by the Lord Lieutenant of the County? He cautioned them against coming to a wrong decision, lest, in surrendering up their own rights, they destroyed the liberties of their country—(*applause.*)

To elect the two sons of a Lord Lieutenant, and a Peer of the realm, to represent a County, was, to their utmost, to undermine the virtues of the Commons, and to reduce the representation of the people to a shadow. In support of what he had said, he should quote an authority, which would not be controverted. He meant John, the first Lord Viscount Lonsdale, who (when Sir John Lowther) represented this County; in troth he was a constitutional whig, a term they now did not often hear; and the meaning of which, some of that Nobleman's descendants professed that they did not understand. This Nobleman, too, was as respectable in his private as in his public character. He was, as the learned Editor of his Memoirs informed us, “at his table hospitable, but not lux-

visions, encouraging the learned and the good, but banishing from his presence, with indignation, the flatterer and the calumniator." When James II. attempted to get into his power the cities and boroughs throughout the kingdom, Sir John Lowther was at the head of the opposition, and on that occasion he said, that it was manifest, when the Crown got possession of the power of sending citizens and burgesses to Parliament, the House of Commons would retain only a mere name; its virtue was gone. If Peers of Parliament and Lord-Lieutenants possessed the power of appointing, not only burgesses, but knights of the shire, the effect which Sir John Lowther foretold was more completely produced. The Noble Lord and his friends had told them, that on their side was the real independence of Westmorland. What? was the real independence of Westmorland only to be defended by 500 gentlemen with staves—(*a laugh.*) Were the two leaders of the real independence of Westmorland to have their persons defended by 500 bludgeon-men, with the gallant Lieutenant-Col. at their head? What a preposterous perversion of the English language was this?—(*Applause.*)—The real independence of Westmorland would need no calumnies, no anonymous letters. It would scorn to encourage attacks on the private character of gentlemen, aye, and of ladies too, in the Courier Newspaper. If the Noble Lord to whom he referred had been alive, he would have needed no body-guard—(*a laugh.*)—the Carlisle Patriot would have had no sale, and private characters would have passed untouched, even, though like him, they voted for his learned friend. His idea of real independence in this, and every other county, was when each individual Freeholder had an opportunity of giving his vote to the Candidate he preferred, without the dread of any over-grown aristocratical power. They had now to secure this independence. He asked them to do their duty, to obey the King's writ, *to retain their loyalty, and preserve their rights*—(*applause.*)—They had to exercise a privilege which was above all price, and they could not do their duty better, nor serve their country more effectually than by sending to the next Parliament, one of the most useful of Patriots, one of the most incorruptible of Statesmen.—(*Loud applause followed this speech.*)

John Wakefield, Esq. said, that, impressed with a due sense of the duty they had to perform, and of the truth of what had been said by Mr. Wybergh, he begged to second his nomination. They all knew the transcendent talents of Mr. Brougham; he had faithfully served the people, and he trusted they would hereafter as heretofore, always find him at his post, and it was time enough, when he deserts the people, for them to desert him.

Lord Lowther said, it was his duty, as well as his wish, to thank the Freeholders for past favours.—He had conscientiously performed the duty which was entrusted to him, and he could only say, that he should not have presented himself upon this occasion, unless he had been called upon by many unbiassed, unsolicited Freeholders. Whatever might be the professions and principles of his antagonist, in attachment to this county he would yield to no one. He owed his former election to the unbiassed choice of the Freeholders, for he had gone through two months canvass previous to the election, and at that time no opposition was made to him. When he was, in Parliament, he had thought it his duty to support the Government against any foreign enemies, and the result was, that we had arrived to a state of affluence, no other country had ever before attained. We now enjoyed the blessings of peace, which had been delayed by the inclemency of the season, and we had reduced the taxes. (Hear.) He asked, could it be denied, that seventeen millions of taxes had been taken off?—No county had made more rapid advancement than Westmorland; thirty Acts for inclosures of commons had been passed since the Union with Ireland, (a laugh,) and a great work was now undertaken, he meant the great canal from the borders of Lancashire. (A laugh) For attention to the immediate interests of the County he challenged any one to charge him with neglect. In his other capacity as a Member of the Council for directing the affairs of the nation, he would take his share of credit or blame attached to the Legislative measures which had been enacted. He placed his independence against that of any one; he had as large a share as any one in the interests of the County, and he had no doubt, but that he should have the honour of being again returned by the County to Parliament.

Col. Lowther said, that two of his family had been returned as Representatives for the County, because no person had ever opposed him, and it was to be concluded, because no such opposition took place, that they were returned by the general consent of the County. In answer to what had been said by Mr. Wybergh, he observed, that he had not known that a beautiful Seat on the top of a hill was necessary to constitute a man to represent the County. He asked, also whether the Kendal Paper had not been full of anonymous letters against his friends, before any had been written on their side, and indeed before a third Candidate had been proposed. He wished any person to stand forward who could prove that any of the Freeholders gave their votes through the influence of the

Lord Lieutenant, and not from their own choice.— Though human nature is liable to deceive itself, he had very great reason, from the success of his canvass, to expect that he should be again elected, and he hoped the Poll would be kept open so as for all to come forward, and if it was the free choice of the people, instead of two Members of one family, he did not see why twenty should not be returned.

Mr. Brougham came forward amidst loud applause, and said, that he as well as Mr. Wybergh congratulated them on the arrival of the day, when the result of their exertions for the liberation of their native County was to be seen. Professions of success were so usual on these occasions, and human nature (as the gallant Colonel had observed) was so apt to indulge in unreasonable hopes, that he should not say one word as to what his hopes—what his most confident expectations of the result of their exertions was. He should not indeed have troubled them at all, and should have been satisfied with proceeding to the material business of the day, had it not been for some topics introduced by the seconder of one of the opposite Candidates, and for some observations of the Candidates themselves. Though he had the support of some who differed from him in political opinions he would not disguise from any man that his doctrine, that his conduct, that his professions were as different from those of the two Noble Candidates as white from black, as midnight from noon-day. (*Applause.*) He would disclaim any feeling of personal hostility or disrespect. They might be unreasonable in their pretensions, but the whole blame of that was not to be attributed to them. The County too should bear its share.—The Freeholders had been too long suffering; they had permitted one man to be named till his death—he meant his kinsman Sir Michael Le Fleming, who had been first elected on the independent interest, but who had continued on very different principles. They had allowed Lord Muncaster to succeed him—when Lord Muncaster had been gathered to his fathers, the gallant Colonel had been nominated in his stead, and on the last occasion Lord Lowther had been elected. It was not to be wondered at, when the County had given so much, that the noble family should not only take that, but grasp at more, and he did not wholly blame them for making this their last effort. It was hardly, perhaps, to be expected, that they should relinquish, without a struggle, two close seats for a respectable and virtuous county. Having said thus much as to private respect, he openly confessed that he disapproved of their whole public conduct, and boldly called upon the Freeholders to contrast it with his own.

Fragment

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See 1822

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John Holme Sea

CLOSE

COMMENTS

UPON A

STRAGGLING

Speech.

AIREY AND BELLINGHAM, PRINTERS, KENDAL.

1818.

COMMENTS

1811

1812

CLOSE COMMENTS.

&c.

WE are told that, during the whole of Mr. Brougham's harangue, which the Kendal Chronicle says lasted an hour, the snow fell without intermission upon that 'numerous assemblage of men, women, and *children*,' which, according to the same paper, listened to Mr. Brougham 'with universal satisfaction.' We cannot say that Mr. Brougham's eloquence was 'as *soft* as feathered snow that melted as it fell;' but in some points, nevertheless, it resembled snow: it fell as fast, and was not at all weightier; and we may hope will have as fugitive a power to annoy the good people of Kendal: in another point it did *not* resemble snow; it was warm—it was even inflammatory; if I were to say incendiary, it will appear from what follows that I should not wrong him.

1st.—As, without condemning himself, Mr. Brougham cannot find fault with us for affixing names to writings which the authors have not avowed, we may begin with observing that Mr. B., the Senator, speaks—as Mr. B., the anonymous Trader in Reviews, writes. He resorts to a stale trick, and affects to separate Lord Lonsdale from those who lend their support to

the Lowther cause—as a generous Principal from ignoble Underlings : his Lordship has ‘better sense’ and ‘more just feelings ;’ but those who support him are ‘indiscreet tools’—are ‘parasites’—are ‘hired agents’—‘whose proceedings it would be a degradation to watch.’ He hopes, by this abuse of those whom he would represent as Underlings, to pass himself off as a Principal. But this will not do : *pace tanti viri*, it is not such an artifice that will screen from our eyes the Underling of Lord Thanet. The case is now understood to stand thus :—Lord Thanet wishes to try the strength of the Lowthers ; but he is prudently economical of his money and his credit, and does not wish to risk much of either upon the issue. No member of his Lordship’s family, therefore, is yet brought forward : that is postponed ; and Mr. Brougham is brought forward, *ad interim*, as a cat’s-paw, to procure Lord Thanet a triumph, if it be possible, or at the worst, to save him from the mortification of a defeat. If any proof were wanting to justify this view of the case, and to prove how laboriously Mr. Brougham plays the part of parasite to his patron, it will be found in the sneer with which he speaks of Lowther Castle—as of a mock castle—connected with the remark that all the real castles in the County belong to Lord Thanet. Lowther Castle is, it seems, a sham castle ; and *Brougham* Castle (as though it stood in any relation to the political Charlatan of that name,)

is one of the real castles ; and *all* the real castles, says he, belong to my———what?—*friend*, Lord Thanet.

2d.—For the sake of accrediting his abuse of those whom he calls ‘ hired agents,’ Mr. Brougham does (as I have said before,) in one part of his speech compliment Lord Lonsdale, by way of distinction from them, on his sense and feeling : but with what consistency ? In another part of the same speech he accuses the noble Earl of doing what he would be above doing himself if he had even but ‘ the tenth part’ of his possessions—of allowing a son of his ‘ to take eleven or twelve hundred pounds a year from the public.’ (Beware, Mr. Brougham, that the Oppositionist, Earl Spencer, does not hear this, or he will call you a conceited coxcomb, not forgetting that his own Son, Lord Althorp, when the Foxites were in power, held the same office !) This Son of the Earl of Lonsdale, and generally all of the House of Lowther, are said to have their ‘ purses filled with public money :’ nay, their own purses do not content them ; they are adjured by Mr. Brougham to keep their hands out of *our** pockets ; (that is, let the reader remember, out of the pockets of a Kendal mob.) Again, the family influence of the Lowthers is secured (Mr. B. in-

* As Mr. Brougham is fond of Shakespeare, I will quote the very *short speech* of *Antonio* in the *Tempest*.—[Act II. Scene I.]—“ If but one of his pockets could speak, would it not say—he lies ?”

sinuates) by 'arts' such as 'the undisputed possession of twenty counties would not bribe' his *friend* Lord Thancet to practise. It is a 'ridiculous thing,' moreover, in Lord Lonsdale to dare him (Mr Brougham) to 'the contrast ;'—Why ? Because he does not 'dread any comparison that *can* be made' between them ; and because he will oppose to Lord Lonsdale's riches his own "present fitness" and his "honesty : " what can this mean but that, as he has nothing to oppose to Lord Lonsdale's wealth except his personal merits and honesty, so Lord Lonsdale has nothing to oppose to *his* honesty except wealth ? Self-contradictions leading to such absurdities are most pitiable things. Mr. Brougham had better desist altogether from praising the Lord Lieutenant, after a declaration that in the generousities of patriotism his Lordship makes a sorry figure compared with himself and the Hereditary High Sheriff. With how little ceremony Mr. Brougham treats his own consciousness, when he would raise his reputation as a public man at the expense of that of Lord Lonsdale, and what especial breach of decency is involved in the attempt, will appear when certain political tamperings in Westmorland (for I wish to keep to the concerns of the County) shall be divulged. One word more, also, upon the subject of the other Individual, whose public character he is so blind as to believe, or so base as to pretend, will acquire lustre by being placed in contrast with that of the Lord Lieutenant.

Leaving out of consideration the ‘arts’ by which Mr. Brougham insinuates that influence is secured, I will ask a question about the *use* that may be made of it *when* secured; and for answer will refer to the hoary Parodist of Scripture, (excellent authority in these matters,) whose jocose effusions proved so entertaining to Mr. B’s supporters at Appleby. Who first *sold* a seat in Westmorland?—Who *next* sold a seat in Westmorland?—What were the sums received?—And whether he of whom the Referee will be reminded on this occasion was not the *only* one who, in our days, has *ever sold* a seat in Westmorland?

3d.—Mr. Brougham, still unable to forget his old trade of scribbling in Reviews, attacks and libels* a man whose name I will not dishonor by connecting it with the trash of a jacobinical harangue. ‘Fit audience let me find, though few,’—has been the prayer of that great man, as of

* By the side of Mr. Brougham’s weightier offences, it is not much to charge him with slighting the courtesies of private life; but let the reader recollect, *first*, that this part of his speech must have been unintelligible to most of his audience, and therefore unserviceable for any object;—*Secondly*, that the gentleman to whom he alluded, had not *avowed* any paper connected with the contest, and could not therefore justly be made answerable by name, or by description, for what might have offended Mr. Brougham;—*Thirdly*, that Mr. B. spoke in the presence of Mr. Crackenthorpe—known to himself as one of his own principal supporters; and to himself, in common with all the respectable part of his audience, as a near relative of the gentleman in question. Among the few *gentlemen* who support Mr. B.

Milton before him ; each knowing that an audience fit for him must in any age be few :—to each of them, I believe, his prayer has been granted. Mr. Brougham also appears to have prayed for an appropriate audience ; and his audience, by the blessing of heaven, shall *not* be few—so long as there are mobs and blackguards in the land—so long as there are ‘ women and children’ on the Fell-side—so long as there is ignorance to be deluded, and malignant folly to applaud. I will take leave to remind him, however, in spite of such applause, that, on more accounts than simply as a Parliamentary Candidate, he is a probationer for public favor ; and that he has something yet to do before he will stand on that height from which he can dispense or withhold laurels after his own private likings and dislikings. His dickey* is not the station from which he can be allowed to give or to take away honor : his own laurels are yet to be earned ; and by more

Mr. C. is one ; and we find that, in a technical sense, he was one of his two supporters whilst speaking. Whether Mr. C. sets a due value upon so illustrious a connexion, is more than I can say ; but at any rate he must feel respect for the private character of his kinsman ; and therefore I should do him wrong to doubt that he must have felt wounded at the manner of Mr. Brougham’s unmerited attack upon him.

* The reader is to be informed, that in villages unfurnished with a Market-Cross, and generally throughout the dales of Westmorland—in default of a tub, or other customary accommodation for itinerant orators—Mr. Brougham harangued his audience from the dickey of his carriage.

severe labours of intellect than he has at this time to shew—whether he appeal to his tongue or to his pen.

4th.—It is false to say that the gentleman just now mentioned, or any other well-wisher of the Lowther cause, ‘has begun the use of personalities;’ it is false to say that this gentleman at all, or the Lowther party generally, has condescended to adopt the use of personalities after this use had been begun by Mr. Brougham’s Committee and the *Kendal Chronicle*. The contest is of necessity in some respects a personal one; since it is fit that Mr. Brougham’s pretensions should be examined: the mere personal question is to some degree, as it happens, a constitutional question. But the intelligent supporters of the Lowther cause have all along raised their views from the personal question to the political question—from a strife about men to a strife about principles; and have not, I affirm, travelled out of this higher region into the personalities which offered themselves further than according to the necessities of the matter. I will not answer for every individual paper: there may possibly be some which I have not seen—less forbearing than those which I have: but that this spirit is *characteristic* of the Lowther party, I may assert without fear of contradiction from any impartial man; and, in part of proof, I appeal to the whole tenor of the *Carlisle Patriot* as contrasted with its antagonist in the same city, and with the *Kendal Chronicle*.

5th.—Mr. Brougham informs us—as of his own private discovery—that England ‘*might* atchieve the highest things’ ‘if all her sons were kind and natural.’ At this day we do not need such news: nor does it need the warrant of a quotation from ‘our immortal poet’—nor a fling at another immortal poet. All her sons are not kind and natural; and yet, in spite of that, England *has* atchieved the highest things—for her own everlasting glory; and for the shame and mortification of Mr. Brougham’s party; and for the confounding of their abject predictions.

6th.—Mr. Brougham speaks angrily of scribblers. Is the trade of chattering then more honorable than that of scribbling?—And does that of scribbling, which it seems is intolerable for electioneering and political purposes, become honorable for purposes of private malignity in Reviews?

7th.—Mr. Brougham is loud and long on the subject of personality; and does not scruple to charge, as the original offender in this way, a man of whom all who know him will bear witness that, neither in the beginning nor in the end of a dispute, is he capable of descending to a littleness so unworthy of himself. But this has been already noticed. Mr. Brougham proceeds to support this ‘jolly slander’ by the following pleasantry:—‘He has never yet been imitated by our side.’ In many capital respects I admit that he has never yet been imitated, nor will be imitated,

by those on Mr. B's side, or on any side. In the particular here meant, however, not only have those on Mr. Brougham's side been the first offenders and the last—and, to my belief, the sole offenders, but, most unfortunately for Mr. Brougham, it happens that the principal specimen of offence in this way is the whole of his own speech ;—it is indeed, in reference to our opinion of its author, memorable that a speech—which might have been expected to contain a bare rehearsal of political grievances, with some account of the panacea offered by the speaker—is so framed as to convey whatever is of public and national import in the shape of a personal invective against some private opponent ; and, as the speech stands in the report of one of Mr. Brougham's friends, it does literally contain gross and scurrilous personalities, more in number than the sentences of which it is composed.

In keeping close to a desultory speech, I have been of necessity desultory. I will conclude by taking a short notice of the answers which Mr. Brougham makes to four charges against himself which he has chosen to single out from amongst many others made against him :—

1. *That he is poor.*—This charge he admits ; and therein to all constitutional ears he admits his unfitness to represent a County ; but, at any rate, even to his own ears poverty can be no absolute recommendation : whence then does he draw his

title? In pure modesty, he draws it from the exchequer of his own services past or to come—of his own labours assigned or assignable—of his own merits sacred or profane—of his own glories to be sung or to be said. Lord Lonsdale, it seems, and the whole property of the County, are bent upon the ruin of the Constitution; if indeed they have not already ruined it. But is there no remedy?—no hope? Yes—thanks be to a discerning mob whether with or without breeches—there is a Brougham, who, from the height of his dickey, can descry the enemies of the State, and will attack them even as erst Guy Earl of Warwick attacked the Dun Cow of Essex. Nevertheless, for a vast majority of the Westmorland Electors, I believe that they will take their chance of ruin with Lord Lonsdale and the property of the County rather than of safety with Mr. B. and his *Sansculloterie*. It is not *generally* made matter of charge against the Lowthers that they are the leading House in Westmorland for property and influence; nor is it *generally* held criminal in them to have carried their great Parliamentary weight to the party who made a conscience of opposing the enemies of England.

2. *That Westmorland is poor.*—And therefore, says Mr. Brougham, according to the Lowther party is of right Lord Lonsdale's property for Parliamentary objects. But in saying this he has grossly misstated the argument of a most able writer; and he has to choose between

a wilful misrepresentation and a misapprehension not creditable to his understanding. Westmorland is undoubtedly, whether for population or wealth, in the rear of the English counties ; however honorably distinguished on other accounts : in many ways I am persuaded that she can shew just titles to respect, though Mr. Brougham insinuates that she cannot when he says that she is to earn the applauses of posterity by voting for him. But, be this as it may, Westmorland is comparatively a poor County ; and, the poorer she is, the more reasonable is the political influence of the Lowthers. Even Mr. Brougham in his present speech, talking, as he is, to a mob, does not disallow ‘ a due influence’ to property ; and, if any influence, I suppose of necessity, a proportionate influence ; so that, if twice as much property, twice as much influence. Now, upon this concession, it becomes a mere question of more and less, whether the House of Lowther ought to influence the return of the two Members, or only of one. Accordingly, at the Dinner which followed the speech under consideration, it was admitted by Mr. Wybergh, using a stronger term than a Lowther Independent would tolerate, ‘ that by their possessions and station in the County, that House was fully entitled to *name* one of its Representatives.’ At this point of the argument then it becomes important to fix the relation between the Lowther property and the County of Westmorland ; for,

as it is in virtue of that relation that the right exists at all, so according to the measure of that relation should the degree of influence be greater or less. It has been accordingly contended, for a clear view of the case, and not in any disparagement of Westmorland, that it is poor to an extent which may justly give to the Lowther property the influence which it has hitherto exercised; and that, if due consideration be given to personal and other circumstances affecting the rest of the leading Families in the County, it will be found that there neither has been an injury nor an indignity in the representation having been placed where it now is. Properties not equal to the Lowther property, and balanced by other great properties, exercise an influence upon the elections in counties sixteen times as populous as this, and far wealthier than by that excess: *a fortiori* then may the Lowther property, which stands unbalanced, and with almost every other considerable property on its side, exercise that influence in this County.

3. *That he and his party are jacobins;*

4. *That he and his party are joined in 'a conspiracy against the great landed proprietors:'*

These two charges may be conveniently thrown together, as they do not otherwise differ than as cause and effect.—Whether Mr. Brougham be a jacobin, Mr. Brougham protests that he cannot tell: if that word means something very charm-

ing, he owns with a blush that it will probably be found true of him ; but if it means, as a friend of his thinks it does, “ something particularly disagreeable, and really unpleasant to talk about,” he begs leave to——have no further acquaintance with it than may be for his convenience. It must not be allowed to depend on Mr. Brougham’s definition of a jacobin—whether we shall account him one of that class. A jacobin is understood to be one who arms the passions of the mob and their ignorance against the property of the State, and the government of the State : for his own safety he may stop short of treason, as defined by law ; and yet, for public mischief and danger, he may go far beyond the evil of any treason that is punishable and formally known as such. By way of disguise a jacobin will generally affect reverence for the personal head of the State ; (accordingly, the King’s Arms was carried before Mr. Brougham on his entrance into Kendal) ; whilst the props on which all supremacy must rest, as the affections of the people towards their immediate superiors and the just influences of rank and property, he will labour to undermine. He, who does this, is a jacobin ; and, if he deny it a thousand times, he is a jacobin. Whether Mr. Brougham has done this, let his writings and his speeches say ; let this speech say ; let the very part of this speech say, in which he is rebutting the charge of jacobinism and conspiracy : he there holds out a threat to the landed proprietors

that from this conflict they may possibly 'retreat despoiled of that legitimate authority which, if exercised within (what Mr. B. thinks) reasonable limits, never would have been disputed or grudged.' A conspiracy, which goes this length, he avows; but no other: he is 'aware of *no other* risk to property'.—What need we any further words?—*Habes confidentem reum!* If a mob be to judge what are the reasonable limits to authority, or if a mob be at all to take part in a conspiracy formed for the objects here avowed, we can well anticipate the issue. But the very act of addressing speeches on political grievances and rights to the mobs of a country—is jacobinism: to make *them* arbiters in questions of this kind—is to reject the constitutional arbitration which lies in the property of the County. And, from the *manner* in which Mr. Brougham has done all this, it demands no great degree of sagacity to foresee at least one result:—the contest began in an effort at dissolving wantonly an old connexion, by the admission of enemies not oppressively maintained, between the County and the paramount House of the County; and it will end assuredly, be the issue what it may in respect to *that* connexion, in embittering the inevitable connexion between the Gentry and their Dependants—between those who can offer counsel and assistance, and those whom it has pleased God to place in a situation to need them.

AN

Address

TO THE

YEOMANRY

OF THE COUNTIES OF

WESTMORLAND and CUMBERLAND,

ON THE PRESENT

STATE OF THEIR REPRESENTATION

IN

PARLIAMENT.

BY A WESTMORLAND YEOMAN.

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ADDRESS, &c.

LITTLE accustomed to express my sentiments on paper, and therefore apprehensive that I might not be able to present them in an intelligible form, yet prompted by a strong sense of public duty, and a warm affection for my native county, I ventured, not many months ago, to address you, my fellow Yeomen, through the columns of a weekly publication.

The design of that first appeal was to sound your inclinations, and try the temper of your minds; for, judging from my own feelings, I could not believe that you, any more than myself, were insensible to the state of political servitude to which you were reduced, or could voluntarily acquiesce in the extinction of all your most valuable privileges. Had it proved, indeed, that from a long suspension of the exercise, you had also lost all estimation of your rights, and that the love of independence and constitutional liberty had no place left in your affections, then must I have contented myself with lamenting in silence and despair, the expiring happiness and freedom of my country. For *here*, have I often said the sacred flame of liberty will live, when in other districts, servility, avarice and luxury, have obliterated the very idea of patriotism; even *here*, in our retired and delightful vallies, the genius of liberty will take her last stand, and gild, with her parting smile, the summits of our mountains.

But I rejoice to say, that I was not destined to feel the bitter disappointment of finding the independent mind extinguished, either in this or the sister county. My appeal was listened to, and my call obeyed with a sympathetic and affectionate ardour; my sentiments have been recognized as the sentiments of thousands,—as the sentiments of a very great majority of such of the inhabitants of these two counties, as dare express or entertain an opinion which is not

dictated by their superiors. This spirit of patriotism has discovered itself in persons above the rank of those, whom I more immediately addressed; and I can say it with no less confidence than satisfaction, that neither numbers, wealth, talents, nor integrity, will be wanting to our cause:—*the emancipation of the county of Westmorland, from the political oppression of the house of Lowther.*

Encouraged by these unequivocal symptoms of a reviving spirit of independence, I now renew my appeal, directed more particularly and formally, to the Yeomanry of my native county, but in a tenor and spirit, scarcely less applicable to those also of Cumberland. If I succeed in gaining your favourable attention, I doubt not but I shall make it appear, that your comforts, as well as privileges, are sacrificed to the present state of your representation, and that it is no less your duty than your interest, to break through a system which threatens to entail moral and political degradation on yourselves, your children, and their posterity.

But it is not enough that I shew you, that a gross abuse exists, and that it is both your duty, and interest, to correct it, except I also succeed in shewing you that the correction is still practicable, and practicable by the simple exercise of those rights, with which the constitution and laws of this country have invested every Freeholder.

The frame of our constitution is certainly incomparably good, and as nearly perfect as can be expected, from any political system of merely human organization. The legislative authority, uniformly diffused over the three Estates of King, Lords, and Commons, but the executive power being committed to the prince alone, is a circumstance wisely contrived, to combine the freedom, patriotism and public spirit of a commonwealth, with the steadiness, vigour and policy, of a monarchical government.

But it will be obvious to every one, that it is not from the name and shadow of a constitution, combined of the three gradations of power, but from the active and virtuous exercise of their several functions, that these advantages must be expected.

If, for instance, the representatives of the people, when

assembled, should assume the power of electing a King, or selecting a House of Lords at their own discretion, who does not perceive that our constitution would, from that moment, lose its mixed character, and degenerate into a mere democracy, or rather into a factious junta under some specious title?—Or, on the other hand, if the prince conspiring with the nobles, should either appoint the persons who are supposed to represent the people, or, when actually chosen by the people, should gain such an undue ascendant over them as to command a majority of their votes; who does not, in this case likewise perceive, that the constitution loses its free character, and passes into a mere despotism, or oligarchy, according as the nobles are subservient to the prince, or the prince to the nobles?

Now, although I do not contend that the Commons have lost *all* authority in the state, yet so far at least, I am borne out by facts, that they have lost their proper rank and dignity, and have fallen into a lamentable state of dependence and subserviency. The majority are, in fact, chosen by the influence, or as the phrase is, “brought in” by the king’s ministers and the peers. And of those who are introduced by the people into the national council, many, allured by the prospect of individual profit or power, shamefully abandon the interests of their constituents, and run the disgraceful race of court favour and ministerial patronage.

What then can be expected from a legislature, however excellent in theory, so perverted and distorted in practice from its original frame and purpose?—What, but acts of legislation suited to the views of those who possess the real power, and a great indifference to the interests of the people? It is, I know, very confidently asserted by wily politicians, and repeated by the thoughtless and credulous, that our political machine, though in many parts warped and decayed, yet, by opposing one defect to another, and by a balance of countervailing props and opposite forces, it runs extremely well, and performs its office even with better effect, and greater precision, than if it were restored to its original simplicity and soundness. Were this actually

the result, however I might dislike the system of keeping the frame of government together by a balance of conflicting vices, yet for myself I should have remained quiet. Nor should I have openly expressed an opinion on politics, except it were to declare my *gratitude* to those statesmen who are degrading their own characters, and polluting their own consciences, for the benevolent purpose of securing to us the blessings of a good government, and the protection of wise and equal laws. But this is so remote from the real state of the case that except the bias which the constitution has received from the dependency of the knights and burgesses on the great lords, be vigorously resisted, by the unanimous efforts of the people, it will gradually circumscribe their privileges, and leave their liberty and property at the mercy of the aristocracy. An impartial review of the statutes passed in the present reign, would prove the existence of such a bias beyond all controversy. But a consideration of the laws, which have received the sanction of the House of Commons within the last twenty-five years, is more than sufficient to shew what has been the predominant influence in that assembly.

Take, for example, the militia laws, which are so constituted as to amount to a conscription among the lower classes of society, while to the higher they are nothing but an insignificant poll tax. Service may, indeed, in all cases be commuted for money, but the sum is the same to poor and rich, and, therefore, the Freeholder of forty shillings a year, or the labourer with no real property, contributes as largely to the defence of the country as the nobleman with an annual income of forty thousand pounds.

Take also the tax on riding horses, which is charged at the same rate on a Yeoman of £ 20. a year, as upon a Nobleman or Esquire of twenty thousand; nor is it the worst feature of the tax that it amounts to an absolute prohibition to the Yeoman from the use of his own horse, however pressing the emergency. For the surveyor, concluding that every man on some necessity or other, (especially if he or any individual of his family be afflicted with sickness), will use his horse at least once in the year, sends him a surcharge

at a venture, and puts him upon his oath; by which he is either to charge or exonerate himself—a mode of proceeding, if not vexatious and tyrannical, certainly most subversive of all religious principle, and a profanation of that sacred book which is abused to such impious purposes.

Another specimen of oppressive taxation meets us in the property tax, by the provisions of which the small estate of the Yeoman was taxed after the same rate as that of the most opulent Lord in the kingdom. If the Yeoman occupied his own freehold he was made liable to an additional seven and a half per cent. and thus the small proprietors were paying three shillings and sixpence, while their legislators were so modest as to be satisfied with contributing from their own pockets two shillings in the pound.

The *excess* of taxation, however, is still more demonstrative of the subserviency of the House of Commons to the executive government, than the *apportionment* of it oppressive as it is. During the reign of his present majesty, the annual taxes have been encreased by fifty millions, nor has that been sufficient to meet the wasteful expenditure of ministers; for there has been added to the national debt, during the same space of time, the enormous sum of seven hundred millions!! The principle of our constitution is, that Englishmen tax themselves; but is that the practice? Is it probable, is it natural, or is it even possible, that the inhabitants of this country could have been so blind to their own comfort, or that of their children, as voluntarily to take upon themselves burthens under which they are not able to stand; and to mortgage, not only their own property to its utmost value, but the fruits of the industry of many generations for questionable objects of policy?

But you are required to believe, that this ever-growing mass of taxes is imposed from honest intentions, if not just views of policy! What, then, were the character and circumstances of those Members who were constantly supporting, by their speeches and votes, these annual supplies? Why, they were by far the greatest part of them men who were largely participating in these taxes when raised; or who had the near prospect of preferment, place, or title for them-

selves or some of their family: or they were members brought into the House of Commons by the Lords, and of course voted as they directed. These were the description of men, who, allured each by his individual interest, voted millions after millions out of the pockets of the people, and have oppressed them with a load of debt and taxation under which they are likely long to linger and struggle but never perhaps to discharge, till set free, or rather entirely ruined by a national bankruptcy, succeeded by a long series of convulsions and anarchy.

We have now had a specimen of the effect of the present system of parliamentary influence upon the legislative enactments; let us next consider a little its operation on the executive department. It is notorious, that the way to succeed to place in the church, in the law, in the revenue, in the army or navy, is not to be qualified for its due discharge, but to secure the interest of some influenced member of parliament; and this system holds, not only in the lower offices but in the appointment of the heads of our ecclesiastical and juridical establishments, and of the commanders of our fleets and armies. And so restrained and shackled is the Monarch by this system, that when inclined, he is told by his advisers that he cannot select the man most fit for an arduous office, except his appointment lays an obligation on some member of the two houses of parliament to vote with ministers! Thus is unfriended merit in every department depressed, and the faithful and zealous servants of the public discouraged and disgusted! In the army and navy, novices, with parliamentary connections, are perpetually rising over the heads of veterans who have fought the battles of their country. And officers thus promoted are entrusted with the lives of their fellow citizens, and the most momentous interests of their country. Thus, wars which are sanctioned in their origin by a corrupt legislature, are protracted in their duration by a paralyzed and encumbered executive, which is not at liberty to select its servants and officers for their merits alone. In contradiction of this I may be told of the exploits of a British army under a Wellington; but these did not take place till twenty years ex-

perience of expensive and disastrous expeditions, commanded as I have before described, had reduced the nation to the utmost distress and danger; and when another defeat would, I will not say have ruined the kingdom but certainly would have destroyed public credit, and shivered to atoms the system of parliamentary influence. Then the ruling party, wise in their own generation, saw that they had arrived at a crisis when they must suspend for a moment, in order to preserve for a perpetuity, their ordinary policy, and did seriously look about for sterling talent. We owe therefore a Wellington, with his trophies at Salamanca, Vittoria and Waterloo, to a long succession of generals, (whose names let eternal silence and oblivion cover), who commanded our brave but unfortunate countrymen in the low countries, Holland, at the Helder, Buenos Ayres, Walcheren, Cintra, and many other quarters which my confined acquaintance with military affairs does not enable me to enumerate. And this is the system of influence so much vaunted and recommended, as being so mild in its operation and beneficial in its effects. A system which, in plain language, is this: that such members should be returned to serve in parliament as are prepared to vote as their noble patrons direct; or to accept place, preferment or pension, as a remuneration for consenting to abridge the liberties and empty the purses of their constituents, in such measure and manner, and directing the proceeds to such purposes as the minister of the day shall prescribe. Now, as to the method of providing ministers with materials proper for this influential process, the chief engine for raising them is some great nobleman in each county, who is himself, in the first place, properly influenced. To him is committed all the government patronage of the county—the civil, military, and ecclesiastical appointments; from which having selected a few of the choicest morsels for himself and family, he applies the remainder, together with his authority as a great landed proprietor, to the laudable purpose of influencing the people.

By having many places, and still more promises to bestow upon those who are sufficiently ductile; he and his agents

exert all their art to teach the Freeholders the same lesson which the ministers have taught the members of parliament: namely, to sell their vote, their honour, their country, and their conscience for the prospect of preferment or place. Nor ought we to be surprised, that men in the humbler walks of life, encouraged by the example of their superiors, and goaded on by necessity, should sometimes sacrifice duty to interest and honour to advancement. But we have reason to be astonished, that men who have received a liberal education, who are far raised above the apprehensions of poverty, are nursed, one might imagine, in the lap of honour, who have great pretensions to morality, and who even talk much of religion, should be the authors or instruments of demoralising the population, and of poisoning the stream of public virtue and happiness at its very source. But scenes of greater turpitude still develop themselves in the election of burgesses in the close boroughs. The constitution of many borough towns, returning members to parliament, is this: the number of voters are limited in the original charter, and the privilege of voting passes from one Freeman to another, together with certain extinct tenements. These tenements, or the majority of them are bought up by some neighbouring grandee. When the time for choosing a new representative arrives, he has these several tenements conveyed, by the semblance of a legal form, to those of his adherents in whom he can best confide, and which instrument is to be destroyed when the election is over. But this is a matter of some difficulty, as it is not easy to find men who will violate an oath, and yet keep their word; who will laugh at perjury, and respect veracity! The truth of this I believe the Earl of Lonsdale experiencéd himself at Haslemere in a recent instance*. But when this is accomplished,

* The case to which I allude is that of John Greenway to whom Lord Lonsdale had conveyed a freehold in the borough of Haslemere, for the purpose of voting for his Lordship's nominee: placed in a situation in which he must either take a false oath, and exercise an usurped act of civil power; or violate his word of honour, given to his patron; he preferred the latter, and exercising his franchise as *bona fide* his own, voted for the opposite party, and made property of the freehold with which he was invested. I leave to casuists to

and these poor victims are thus invested with their fictitious franchise, they are conducted before the Mayor, and in his presence, and in the presence of their fellow-men, and in the name and presence of the most high God, solemnly and deliberately swear that they are *bona fide* proprietors of certain extinct tenements; in right of which they are entitled to give their vote in the election of a member of parliament. Can any thing on earth be more corrupt, more profligate, more revolting to a virtuous mind, or more offensive to a God of truth and justice than such a complication of crimes. Consider, too, who are the authors and abettors of such scenes; and then tell me whether you, my fellow Yeomen, are willing to be any longer either the promoters or dupes of this disgraceful system; which is not only calculated to obliterate every trace of virtue, conscience and religion from amongst us; but even to draw down the signal vengeance of heaven on a nation, which in its most solemn transactions combines the prostitution of all public duty, with the most notorious falsehood and deliberate perjury.

But why, you will begin to ask, address these observations, which are common to the whole nation, to the Freeholders of Westmorland in particular? Because you furnish the most striking instance in this kingdom of the system I have been reprobating. Four members are returned to parliament from this county: two knights of the shire, and two burgesses for the town of Appleby. Three of them are as absolutely and immediately nominated by the Earl of Lonsdale as his own butler or valet; and we have no security but this nobleman's good taste, against these *respectable* individuals being qualified and appointed by him at some future election as the actual representatives of this county. Now, as to the morality and expediency of such a system I may appeal to every man's common sense. As to its legality and consistency with the constitution, I refer to the subjoined extract from Blackstone, whose authority as a con-

settle the balance of turpitude and guilt in such an alternative; and to the conscience of honest men to designate the conduct of every one, principal, agent, and instrument who are engaged in such foul transactions.

stitutional lawyer, I believe the most venal and servile of the interpreters of the law will not venture to question. "And as it is essential to the very being of parliament, that elections should be absolutely free, therefore all undue influences upon the electors are illegal, and strongly prohibited; for Mr. Locke ranks it among those breaches of trust in the executive Magistrate, which, according to his notions, amount to a dissolution of the government, if he employs the force, treasure, and offices of the society, to corrupt the representatives; or openly to pre-engage the electors, and prescribe what manner of persons shall be chosen. For thus to regulate candidates and electors, and new model the ways of election, what is it, says he*, but to cut up the government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security." And a little below, the same respectable author informs us, "By vote also of the House of Commons, to whom alone belongs the power of determining contested elections, no Lord of parliament, or Lord Lieutenant of a county, hath any right to interfere in the election of commoners. If any officer of the excise, customs, stamps, or certain other branches of the revenue, presume to intermeddle in elections, by persuading any voter, or dissuading him; he forfeits one hundred pounds, and is disabled from holding any office." Nay, so notoriously opposite to the principles of our constitution is the interference of Peers of the realm in elections of the commons, that the following votes are publicly read at the commencement of every session. "That no Peer of this realm hath any right to give his vote in the election of any member to serve in parliament."

"That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the commons of Great Britain for any Lord of parliament, or any Lord Lieutenant of any county, to concern themselves in the elections of members to serve for the commons in parliament."

Now the language of our laws is this, that "no Lord of parliament, or Lord Lieutenant of a county, hath any right to interfere in the election of commoners." But it is not a

* Book I. p. 178. Christian's edition.

mere interference with the *election*, but an absolute *appointment* of our representatives that we have to complain of, by one who is both our Lord Lieutenant and a Lord of parliament! How is this to be reconciled with that admiration of our happy constitution, with that veneration for the laws, with that abhorrence of every illegal act or disaffected word which is pretended by the same persons who are guilty of a crime which, in the opinion of the soundest reasoner that ever wrote in the English language, is put upon a level, (in guilt and turpitude I mean but not in punishment,) to high treason; because by it, he says, "government is cut up by the roots, and the very fountain of public security is poisoned." Or, are we to be told, and when told tamely acquiesce in it, that to *trample under foot* the rights of the people is so meritorious a thing, as to justify the means however base and criminal: but to *assert* these rights, however moderately and legally, is faction, sedition and treason. But we shall not only be told so, but feel it so, ere long if we submit as patiently and silently to an over-grown and ever-growing power, as we have done during the last forty years. The laws are gradually but progressively tending to that point. Ambition and love of power are active and indefatigable principles, and if not met by patriotism and independence on our part, will, infallibly, in the end fix their fetters and manacles so closely around us as to deprive us of the power to resist.

And what, I pray, is it that we gain by this complaisance and subserviency? Why—the contempt and disdain of the family that has the benefit of it: That we may not flatter ourselves with any shadow of independence, or any decent veil to cover our disgrace, the Earl of Lonsdale nominates two of his sons as representatives of the county; young men with whose private character I have nothing to do, but of whom as public men I have a right to say, that they have not one qualification that fits them for their office, except that of being connected with the Lord Lieutenant both as their patron and father; their political submission must, by a double obligation then, be unqualified and profound. Their *votes* in the House of Commons, (for of their

speeches we have no reports) bear testimony to the influence under which they act. As young men, we cannot suppose all the kindlier blood frozen in their veins there must be some drops in circulation of that natural temperament which combines with generosity, patriotism and compassion; nor will I be so unjust to them, as to suppose that, if left to the spontaneous movements of their hearts, they would not, upon occasion, originate some measure for the common benefit, for the relief and advantage of their constituents or at least for their own popularity; but alas! in their whole parliamentary conduct not a symptom of such feelings appear, but a uniform cold-hearted resistance to every patriotic or popular measure; while, on the contrary, when new taxes are proposed or old ones to be continued; when new restrictions are to be laid on the liberty of the subject, or the old bulwarks to be thrown down; there we never fail to see the names of these young men in the list of veteran jobbers and dealers in places and pensions. Indeed I am almost ashamed to say, that the young nobleman, who is heir apparent perhaps to the fairest patrimony, of any subject in the British dominions, degrades and disgraces himself by accepting and holding two places, virtually sinecures, one of £1000. a year, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and another of £1600. as one of the junior Lords of the Treasury. The first consequence of his thus dipping his hand into the public exchequer and sharing the spoils of the people is, that he is the servant of the ministers, ready for any work they may require of him, whether it may be to vote the renewal of the Property Tax, or a fresh suspension of the Habeas Corpus, or any other measure equally oppressive and odious.

Another evil consequence is, that he is the means of increasing the burthens of this county £2600. every year; for although his annuity is paid out of the general fund of the nation, yet as the system is universal, and we have no reason to suppose that our representative receives higher wages than those who perform the same service in other counties, there is no error in considering each member with a place, the annuitant of his own county. Consider, now,

the year of difficulty and distress we have just passed through, and the hardship, poverty, and even hunger to which many of his lordship's constituents were exposed while they were contributing to supply—what wants?—or repay what services? of their noble representative.—As to the nature of his services, I have already characterized them; but as to his wants I decline to touch on them, lest, contrary to my resolution, I should be led to animadvert on the private habits and pursuits of any individual.

That you have surrendered your franchises, my fellow countrymen, and sacrificed the interests of your country by patiently acquiescing in these abuses, is manifest: but you have as some equivalent to those sacrifices, improved, perhaps, your condition as Freeholders of Westmorland; that is to say, you have the satisfaction of seeing your magistracy, your clergy, your military and civil officers, selected and preferred for their subserviency to the ambition of one family, and their hostility to manly and independent principles; you have the satisfaction of feeling a kind of domestic tyranny established at your own doors, so that you can neither take a step nor utter a word, but under the eye of minions who are ready to stigmatise every free sentiment as jacobinism or treason.

Your fields are trampled upon,—your dwellings invaded,—and your persons insulted, by a swarm of insolent gamekeepers; and to such a degree does your political master despise your weakness, or presume on your tameness, that his farms are let to the highest bidder, and his tenants, as no longer necessary to support his ascendancy, are left to struggle with exorbitant rents, and to live under the terrors of the bailiff and a jail.

The remedy which I propose for these numerous evils is one as effectual, as it is simple and practicable; *that by a firm, unanimous, and spirited effort we bring in, free of all expence to himself, and therefore free to serve his country faithfully, one independent member for this county*; the effect of such an effort would be felt, not only in the emancipation of our native county, but would diffuse its salutary influence through every corner of the land; it will shew the ministry, and

their adherents, that there is a point beyond which human patience will not endure: and that in order to secure the suffrages of the people, they must not merely pander to the ambition and avarice of the few; but, by wise and equal laws,—by a frugal dispensation of the revenue,—and a consequent diminution of the public burthens; by an honest and judicious selection of public servants; and, lastly, by an abolition of vexatious and oppressive statutes, conciliate the good opinion and promote the happiness of the whole nation.

Despising, therefore, the threats, and scorning the bribes of those who have too long wanted in the exercise of a power emanating from yourselves; I entreat you to exercise, at the ensuing contest, a disinterested and patriotic conduct, worthy of men descended from free and virtuous ancestors, and worthy to transmit a noble inheritance to your posterity. Remember that not only the authors and instigators of corruption, but the agents and instruments are culpable in the sight of God and man; that to betray your country is not less sordid and criminal, and is even a thousand times more mischievous, both in its example and effect than betraying your friend; in as much as the bad consequences of the latter is confined to an individual, or at least to a few witnesses, those of the former extend to unnumbered and unborn millions; you love your friends, you love your kindred, your parents and children, but before and above all, you love your country, since it embraces and comprehends the affections and interests of all other objects. Shew but the same integrity, firmness and disinterestedness in the most noble and important act of your lives, that you do in every private transaction, and the cause of your country will prosper in your hands:—consult your own unbiassed judgments,—satisfy your own consciences,—then, if we are defeated we shall have many reflections to soothe our disappointment; but if, as I trust we shall be, successful, we will have no compunctions of conscience to mar our triumph.

A WESTMORLAND YEOMAN.

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AN ADDRESS TO THE YEOMANRY
OF THE COUNTIES OF
WESTMORLAND & CUMBERLAND,
ON THE PRESENT STATE OF
THEIR REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT,

LITTLE accustomed to express my sentiments on paper, and therefore apprehensive that I might not be able to present them in an intelligible form, yet, prompted by a strong sense of public duty, and a warm affection for my native country, I ventured, not many months ago, to address you, my fellow Yeomen, through the columns of a weekly publication.

The design of that first appeal was to sound your inclinations, and try the temper of your minds; for, judging from my own feelings, I could not believe that you, any more than myself, were insensible to the state of political servitude to which you were reduced, or could voluntarily acquiesce in the extinction of all your most valuable privileges. Had it proved, indeed, that from a long suspension of the exercise, you had also lost all estimation of your rights, and that the love of independence and constitutional liberty had no place left in your affections, then must I have contented myself with lamenting in silence and despair, the expiring happiness and freedom of my country. For *here*, have I often said, the sacred flame of liberty will live, when in other districts, servility, avarice and luxury, have obliterated the very idea of patriotism; even *here*, in our retired and delightful vallies, the genius of liberty will take his last stand, and gild, with his parting smile, the summits of our mountains.

But I rejoice to say, that I was not destined to feel the bitter disappointment of finding the independent mind extinguished, either in this or the sister county. My appeal was listened to, and

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my call obeyed with a sympathetic and affectionate ardour ; my sentiments have been recognized as the sentiments of thousands —as the sentiments of a very great majority of such of the inhabitants of these two counties, as dare express, or entertain, an opinion which is not dictated by their superiors. This spirit of patriotism has discovered itself in persons above the rank of those whom I more immediately addressed ; and I can say it with no less confidence than satisfaction, that neither numbers, wealth, talents, nor integrity, will be wanting to our cause:—*the emancipation of the county of Westmorland, from the political oppression of the house of Lowther.*

Encouraged by these unequivocal symptoms of a reviving spirit of independence, I now renew my appeal, directed more particularly and formally to the Yeomanry of my native county, but in a tenor and spirit, scarcely less applicable to those also of Cumberland. If I succeed in gaining your favourable attention, I doubt not but I shall make it appear, that your comforts, as well as privileges, are sacrificed to the present state of your representation ; and that it is no less your duty than your interest, to break through a system which threatens to entail moral and political degradation on yourselves, your children and their posterity.

But it is not enough that I shew you that a gross abuse exists, and that it is both your duty and interest to correct it ; except I also succeed in shewing you that the correction is still practicable, and practicable by the simple exercise of those rights, with which the constitution and laws of this country have invested every Freeholder.

The frame of our constitution is certainly incomparably good, and as nearly perfect as can be expected, from any political system of merely human organization. The legislative authority being uniformly diffused over the three estates of King, Lords, and Commons, while the executive power is committed to the prince alone, is a circumstance wisely contrived, to combine the freedom, patriotism and public spirit of a commonwealth, with the steadiness, vigour and policy of a monarchical government.

But it will be obvious to every one, that it is not from the name and shadow of a Constitution, combined of the three gradations of power, but from the active and virtuous exercise of their several functions, that these advantages must be expected.

If, for instance, the representatives of the people, when assembled, should assume the power of electing a King, or selecting a House of Lords at their own discretion, who does not perceive that our constitution would from that moment, lose its mixed character, and degenerate into a mere democracy, or rather into a factious junta under some specious title?—Or, on the other hand, if the prince conspiring with the nobles, should either appoint the persons who are supposed to represent the people, or, when actually chosen by the people, should gain such an undue ascendent over them as to command a majority of their votes; who does not, in this case likewise perceive, that the constitution loses its free character, and passes into a mere despotism, or oligarchy, according as the nobles are subservient to the prince, or the prince to the nobles?

Now, although I do not contend that the Commons have lost *all* authority in the state, yet so far, at least, I am borne out by facts, that they have lost their proper rank and dignity, and have fallen into a lamentable state of dependence and subserviency. The majority are, in fact, chosen by the influence of, or as the phrase is, “brought in by” the king’s ministers and the peers. And of those who are introduced by the *people* into the national council, many, allured by the prospect of individual profit or power, shamefully abandon the interests of their constituents, and run the disgraceful race of court favour and ministerial patronage.

What then can be expected from a legislature, however excellent in theory, so perverted and distorted in practice from its original frame and purpose?—What, but acts of legislation suited to the views of those who possess the real power, and a great indifference to the interests of the people? It is, I know, very confidently asserted by wily

politicians, and repeated by the thoughtless and credulous, that our political machine, though in many parts warped and decayed, yet, by opposing one defect to another, and by a balance of countervailing props and opposite forces, runs extremely well, and performs its office even with better effect, and greater precision, than if it were restored to its original simplicity and soundness. Were this actually the result, however I might dislike the system of keeping the frame of government together by a balance of conflicting vices, yet for myself, I should have remained quiet, nor should I have openly expressed an opinion on politics, except it were to declare my *gratitude* to those statesmen, who are degrading their own characters, and polluting their own consciences, for the benevolent purpose of securing to us the blessings of a good government, and the protection of wise and equal laws. But this is so remote from the real state of the case, that except the bias which the constitution has received from the dependency of the knights and burgesses on the great lords, be vigorously resisted by the unanimous efforts of the people, it will gradually circumscribe their privileges, and leave their liberty and property at the mercy of the aristocracy. An impartial review of the statutes passed in the present reign, would prove the existence of such a bias beyond all controversy. But a consideration of the laws, which have received the sanction of the House of Commons within the last twenty-five years, is more than sufficient to shew what has been the predominant influence in that assembly.

Take, for example, the militia laws, which are so constituted as to amount to a conscription among the lower classes of society, while to the higher they are nothing but an insignificant poll tax. Service may, indeed, in all cases be commuted for money, but the sum is the same to poor and rich, and, therefore, the Freeholder of forty shillings a-year, or the labourer with no real property, contributes as largely to the defence of the country as the nobleman with an annual income of forty thousand pounds.

Take also the tax on riding horses, which is

charged at the same rate on a Yeoman of twenty pounds a-year, as upon a Nobleman or Esquire of twenty thousand ; nor is it the worst feature of the tax that it amounts to an absolute prohibition to the Yeoman from the use of his own horse, however pressing the emergency. For the surveyor, concluding that every man, on some necessity or other, (especially if he or any individual of his family be afflicted with sickness), will use his horse at least once in the year, sends him a surcharge at a venture, and puts him upon his oath, by which he is either to charge or exonerate himself—a mode of proceeding, if not vexatious and tyrannical, certainly most subversive of all religious principle, and a profanation of that sacred book which is abused to such impious purposes.

Another specimen of oppressive taxation meets us in the property tax, by the provisions of which the small estate of the Yeoman was taxed after the same rate as that of the most opulent Lord in the kingdom. If the Yeoman occupied his own freehold he was made liable to an additional seven and a half per cent. and thus the small proprietors were paying three shillings and sixpence, while their legislators were so modest as to be satisfied with contributing from their own pockets two shillings in the pound.

The *excess* of taxation, however, is still more demonstrative of the subserviency of the House of Commons to the executive government, than the *apportionment* of it oppressive as it is. During the reign of his present Majesty, the annual taxes have been increased by *fifty millions* ; nor has that been sufficient to meet the wasteful expenditure of ministers : for there has been added to the national debt, during the same space of time, the enormous sum of *seven hundred millions* !! The principle of our constitution is, that Englishmen tax themselves ; but is that the practice ? Is it probable, is it natural, or is it even possible, that the inhabitants of this country could have been so blind to their own comfort and that of their children, as voluntarily to take upon themselves burthens, under which they are not able to stand ; and to mortgage, not only their own property to its utmost value,

but the fruits of the industry of many generations for questionable objects of policy?

But you are required to believe, that this ever-growing mass of taxes is imposed from honest intentions, if not just views of policy! What, then, were the character and circumstances of those Members who were constantly supporting, by their speeches and votes, these annual supplies? Why, they were, by far the greatest part of them, men who were largely participating in these taxes when raised; or who had the near prospect of preferment, place, or title for themselves or some of their family; or they were Members brought into the House of Commons by the Lords, and of course voted as they directed. These were the description of men, who, allured each by his individual interest, voted millions after millions out of the pockets of the people, and have oppressed them with a load of debt and taxation under which they are likely long to linger and struggle, but never perhaps to discharge, till set free, or rather entirely ruined, by a national bankruptcy, succeeded by a long series of convulsions and anarchy.

We have now had a specimen of the effect of the present system of parliamentary influence upon the legislative enactments; let us next consider a little its operation on the executive department. It is notorious, that the way to succeed to place in the church, in the law, in the revenue, in the army or navy, is not so much to be qualified for its due discharge, as to secure the interest of some influenced member of parliament: and this system holds, not only in the lower offices, but in the appointment of the heads of our ecclesiastical and juridical establishments, and of the commanders of our fleets and armies. And so restrained and shackled is the Monarch by this system, that when inclined, he is told by his advisers that he cannot select the man most fit for an arduous office, except his appointment lays an obligation on some member of the two houses of parliament to vote with ministers! Thus is unfriended merit in every department depressed, and the faithful and zealous servants of the public discouraged and disgusted! In the army and navy, novices, with parliamentary

connections, are perpetually rising over the heads of veterans who have fought the battles of their country. And officers thus promoted are entrusted with the lives of their fellow-citizens, and the most momentous interests of their country. Thus, wars which are sanctioned in their origin by a corrupt legislature, are protracted in their duration by a paralysed and encumbered executive, which is not at liberty to select its servants and officers for their merits alone. In contradiction of this I may be told of the exploits of a British army under Wellington; but these did not take place till twenty years experience of expensive and disastrous expeditions, commanded as I have before described, had reduced the nation to the utmost distress and danger; and when another defeat would, I will not say have ruined the kingdom, but certainly would have destroyed public credit, and shivered to atoms the system of parliamentary influence. Then the ruling party, wise in their own generation, saw that they had arrived at a crisis when they must suspend for a moment, in order to preserve for a perpetuity, their ordinary policy, and did seriously look about for sterling talent. We owe therefore a Wellington, with his trophies at Salamanca, Vittoria and Waterloo, to a long succession of generals, (whose names let eternal silence and oblivion cover) who commanded our brave but unfortunate countrymen in the low countries, Holland, at the Helder, Buenos Ayres, Walcheren, Cintra, and many other quarters which my confined acquaintance with military affairs does not enable me to enumerate. And this is the system of influence so much vaunted and recommended, as being so mild in its operation and beneficial in its effects. A system which, in plain language, is this: that such members should be returned to serve in parliament as are prepared to vote as their noble patrons direct; or to accept place, preferment, or pension, as a remuneration for consenting to abridge the liberties and empty the purses of their constituents, in such measure and manner, and directing the proceeds to such purposes, as the minister of the day shall prescribe. Now, as to the method of providing ministers with *materials* proper for this

influential process. The chief engine for raising them is some great nobleman in each county, who is himself, in the first place, properly influenced. To him is committed all the government patronage of the county—the civil, military and ecclesiastical appointments; from which having selected a few of the choicest morsels for himself and family, he applies the remainder, together with his authority as a great landed proprietor, to the laudable purpose of influencing the people.

By having many places, and still more promises to bestow upon those who are sufficiently ductile; he and his agents exert all their art to teach the Freeholders the same lesson which the ministers have taught the members of parliament; namely, to sell their vote, their honour, their country, and their conscience, for the prospect of preferment or place. Nor ought we to be surprized, that men in the humbler walks of life, encouraged by the example of their superiors, and goaded on by necessity, should sometimes sacrifice duty to interest and honour to advancement. But we have reason to be astonished, that men who have received a liberal education, who are far raised above the apprehensions of poverty, are nursed, one might imagine, in the lap of honour who have great pretensions to morality, and who even talk much of religion, should be the authors or instruments of demoralizing the population, and of poisoning the stream of public virtue and happiness at its very source.

But scenes of greater turpitude still develop themselves in the election of burgesses in the close boroughs. The constitution of many borough towns, returning members to parliament, is this: the number of voters are limited in the original charter, and the privilege of voting passes from one Freeman to another, together with certain extinct tenements. These tenements, or the majority of them, are bought up by some neighbouring grandee. When the time for choosing a new representative arrives, the *patron* has these several tenements conveyed, by the semblance of a legal form, to those of his adherents in whom he can best confide, and which instrument is to be destroyed when the election is over. But this is an

affair of some delicacy, as it is not easy to find men who will violate an oath, and yet keep their word; who will laugh at perjury, and respect veracity! The truth of this I believe the Earl of Lonsdale himself experienced at Haslemere in a recent instance*. But when this is accomplished, and these poor victims are thus invested with their fictitious franchise, they are conducted before the mayor, and in his presence, and in the presence of their fellow-men, and in the name and presence of the most high God, solemnly and deliberately swear that they are *bona fide* proprietors of certain extinct tenements, in right of which they are entitled to give their vote in the election of a member of parliament. Can any thing on earth be more corrupt, more profligate, more revolting to a virtuous mind, or more offensive to a God of truth and justice, than such a complication of crimes? Consider, too, who are the authors and abettors of such scenes, and then tell me whether you, my fellow yeomen, are willing to be any longer either the promoters or dupes of this disgraceful system; which is not only calculated to obliterate every trace of virtue, conscience and religion from amongst us; but even to draw down the signal vengeance of heaven on a nation, which in its most solemn transactions combines the prostitution of all public duty, with the most notorious falsehood and deliberate perjury.

But why, you will begin to ask, address these observations which are common to the whole nation, to the Freeholders of Westmorland in parti-

* The case to which I allude is that of John Greenway, to whom Lord Lonsdale had conveyed a Freehold in the borough of Haslemere, for the purpose of voting for his Lordship's nominee. Placed in a situation in which he must either take a false oath, and exercise an usurped act of civil power, or violate his word of honour given to his patron, he preferred the latter, and exercising his franchise as *bona fide* his own, voted for the opposite party, and made property of the freehold with which he was invested. I leave to casuists to settle the balance of turpitude and guilt in such an alternative; and to the conscience of honest men to designate the conduct of every one, principal, agent and instrument, who are engaged in such foul transactions.

cular? Because you furnish the most striking instance in this kingdom of the system I have been reprobating. Four members are returned to parliament from this county; two knights of the shire, and two burgesses for the town of Appleby. Three of them are as absolutely and immediately nominated by the Earl of Lonsdale as his own butler or valet. And we have no security but this nobleman's good taste, against these *respectable* individuals being qualified and appointed by him at some future election, as the actual representatives of this county. Now, as to the morality and expediency of such a system, I may appeal to every man's common sense. As to its legality and consistency with the constitution, I refer to the subjoined extract from Blackstone, whose authority as a constitutional lawyer, I believe the most venal and servile of the interpreters of the law will not venture to question. "And as it is essential to the very being of parliament, that elections should be absolutely free, therefore all undue influences upon the electors are illegal, and strongly prohibited; for Mr. Locke ranks it among those breaches of trust in the executive Magistrate, which, according to his notions, amount to a dissolution of the government, if he employs the force, treasure, and offices of the society, to corrupt the representatives; or openly to engage the electors, and prescribe what manner of persons shall be chosen. For thus to regulate candidates and electors, and new model the ways of election, what is it, says he*, but to cut up the government by the roots, and poison the very fountain of public security." And a little below, the same respectable author informs us, "By a vote also of the House of Commons, to whom alone belongs the power of determining contested elections, no Lord of Parliament, or Lord Lieutenant of a county, hath any right to interfere in the election of commoners. If any officer of the excise, customs, stamps, or certain other branches of the revenue, presume to intermeddle in elections, by persuading any voter, or

* Book I. p. 178. Christian's edition.

“dissuading him; he forfeits one hundred pounds, “and is disabled from holding any office.” Nay, so notoriously opposite to the principles of our constitution is the interference of Peers of the realm in elections of the Commons, that the following votes are publicly read at the commencement of every session “That no Peer of this realm hath any right to give his vote in the election of any member to serve in parliament.”

“That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the commons of Great Britain for any Lord of parliament, or any Lord Lieutenant of any county, to concern themselves in the elections of members to serve for the commons in parliament.”

Now the language of our laws is this, that “no Lord of parliament, or Lord Lieutenant of a county, hath any right to interfere in the election of commons.” But it is not a mere interference with the *election*, but an absolute *appointment* of our representatives that we have to complain of, by one who is both our Lord Lieutenant and a Lord of parliament! How is this to be reconciled with that admiration of our happy constitution; with that veneration for the laws; with that abhorrence of every illegal act or disaffected word which is pretended by the same persons who are guilty of a crime which, in the opinion of the soundest reasoner that ever wrote in the English language, is put upon a level, (in guilt and turpitude I mean but not in punishment) to high treason; because by it, he says “government is cut up by the roots, and the very fountain of public security is poisoned.” Or, are we to be told, and when told, tamely acquiesce in it, that to *trample under foot* the rights of the people is so meritorious a thing, as to justify the means however base and criminal; but to *assert* these rights, however moderately and legally, is factious, sedition and treason! But we shall not only be told so, but feel it so ere long; if we submit as patiently and silently to an over-grown and evergrowing power, as we have done during the last forty years. The laws are gradually but progressively tending to that point. Ambition and love of power are active and indefatigable princi-

ples, and if not met by patriotism and independence on our part, will infallibly in the end fix their fetters and manacles so closely around us as to deprive us of the power to resist.

And what, I pray, is it that we gain by this complaisance and subserviency? Why—the contempt and disdain of the family that has the benefit of it. That we may not flatter ourselves with any shadow of independence, or any decent veil to cover our disgrace, the Earl of Lonsdale nominates two of his sons as representatives of the county; young men with whose private character I have nothing to do, but of whom as public men I have a right to say, that they have not one qualification that fits them for their office, except that being connected with the Lord Lieutenant both as their patron and father, their political submission must, by a double obligation, be unqualified and profound. Their *votes* in the House of Commons, (for of their *speeches* we have no reports,) bear testimony to the influence under which they act. As young men, we cannot suppose all the kindlier blood frozen in their veins: There must be some drops in circulation of that natural temperament which combines with generosity, patriotism and compassion; nor will I be so unjust to them as to suppose, that if left to the spontaneous movements of their own hearts, they would not, upon occasion, originate some measures for the common benefit, for the relief and advantage of their constituents, or at least for their own popularity; but alas! in their whole Parliamentary conduct not a symptom of such feelings appears, but an uniform, cold-hearted resistance to every patriotic or popular measure; while, on the contrary, when new taxes are to be imposed, or old ones continued; when new restrictions are to be laid on the liberty of the subject, or the old bulwarks to be thrown down; there we never fail to see the names of these young men in the list of veteran jobbers and dealers in places and pensions. Indeed I am almost ashamed to say, that the young nobleman who is heir apparent to perhaps the fairest patrimony of any subject in the British dominions, degrades and disgraces himself by ac-

cepting and holding two places, virtually sinecures, one of £1,000 a-year, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and another of £1,600 as one of the junior Lords of the Treasury. The first consequence of his thus dipping his hand into the public Exchequer and sharing the spoils of the people is, that he is the servant of the ministers, ready for any work they may require of him, whether it may be to vote the renewal of the Property Tax, or a fresh suspension of the Habeas Corpus, or any other measure equally oppressive and odious.

Another evil consequence is, that he is the means of increasing the burthens of this county £2,600 every year; for although his annuity is paid out of the general fund of the nation, yet, as the system is universal, and we have no reason to suppose that our representative receives higher wages than those who perform the same service in other counties, there is no error in considering each member with a place the annuitant of his own county. Consider, now, the year of difficulty and distress we have just passed through, and the hardship, poverty, and even hunger to which many of his lordship's constituents were exposed while they were contributing to supply—what wants?—or repay what services? of their noble representative—As to the nature of his services, I have already characterized them; but as to his wants I decline to touch on them, lest, contrary to my resolution, I should be led to advert on the private habits and pursuits of any individual.

That you have surrendered your franchises, my fellow countrymen, and sacrificed the interests of your country by patiently acquiescing in these abuses, is manifest; but you have, as some equivalent to those sacrifices, improved, perhaps, your condition as Freeholders of Westmorland; that is to say, you have the *satisfaction* of seeing your magistracy, your clergy, your military and civil officers, selected and preferred for their subservency to the ambition of one family, and their hostility to manly and independent principles; you have the *satisfaction* of feeling a kind of domestic tyranny established at your own doors, so that

you can neither take a step, nor utter a word, but under the eye of minions who are ready to stigmatise every free sentiment as jacobinism or treason.

Your fields are trampled upon,—your dwellings invaded,—your persons insulted by a swarm of insolent gamekeepers; and to such a degree does your political master despise your weakness, or presume on your tameness, that his farms are let to the highest bidder; and his tenants as no longer necessary to support his ascendancy, are left to struggle with exorbitant rents, and to live under the terrors of the bailiff and a jail.

The remedy which I propose for these numerous evils is one as effectual as it is simple and practicable; *that by a firm, unanimous, and spirited effort we bring in, free of all expence to himself, and therefore free to serve his country faithfully, one independent member for this county:* The effect of such an effort would be felt, not only in the emancipation of our native country, but would diffuse its salutary influence through every corner of the land; it will show the ministry and their adherents, that there is a point beyond which human patience will not endure; and that in order to secure the suffrages of the people, they must not merely pander to the ambition and avarice of the few; but, by wise and equal laws,—by a frugal dispensation of the revenue,—and a consequent diminution of the public burthens; by an honest and judicious selection of public servants; and lastly, by an abolition of vexatious and oppressive statutes, conciliate the good opinion and promote the happiness of the whole nation.

Despising therefore the threat, and scorning the bribes, of those who have too long wanted in the exercise of a power emanating from yourselves, I entreat you to exercise, at the ensuing contest, a disinterested and patriotic conduct, worthy of men descended from free and virtuous ancestors, and worthy to transmit a noble inheritance to your posterity. Remember that not only the authors and instigators of corruption, but the agents and instruments are culpable in the sight of God and man; that to betray your country is not less sordid and criminal, and is even a thou-

sand times more mischievous, both in its example and effect than betraying your friend; in as much as the bad consequences of the latter is confined to an individual, or at least to a few witnesses, whilst those of the former extend to unnumbered and unborn millions. You love your friends, you love your kindred, your parents, and children, but before and above all, you love your country, since it embraces and comprehends the affections and interests of all other objects. Shew but the same integrity, firmness, and disinterestedness in the most public and important act of your lives, that you do in every private transaction, and the cause of your country will prosper in your hands:—consult your own unbiassed judgments,—satisfy your own consciences,—then, if we are defeated, we shall have many reflections to soothe our disappointment; but if, as I trust we shall be, successful, we shall have no compunction of conscience to mar our triumph.

A WESTMORLAND YEOMAN.

LATE DEBATE

ON THE

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT BILL.

This Bill has for its object to enable Freeholders to vote although they are not assessed to the Land Tax. The reason for it is plain—since above half the Land Tax is redeemed, the whole reason of the Act has ceased; and it only operates as a disfranchisement of good votes, or to make Candidates redeem the Land Tax on those freeholds which are not accurately assessed.

Last Session a Bill was brought in by Mr. Wynn, and passed the Commons with little or no opposition; but was thrown out in the Lords on account of the lateness of the Session. It contained many regulations regarding Elections, which were objected to, and particularly one to throw the expences of the Hustings on the County rate. But it contained also the regulation respecting the Land Tax, to which neither Sir James Graham nor Mr. Lowther, nor Colonel Lowther, nor Lord Lowther made the smallest objection. Indeed Mr. Brougham having expressed his total dissent from some *other* parts of the Bill, and

especially the clause providing for the expense of the Hustings, he moved to have the third reading put off a few days, that these things might be considered, stating, however his approbation of the clause relative to the Land Tax.

Some weeks ago Mr. Wynn brought in his Bill again. Mr Brougham strongly opposed the part relative to expenses of Hustings, and supported the Land Tax part. The whole, however, was thrown out, the Lowther Members having *discovered* reasons against it which they never thought of last Session. Soon afterwards the Hon Mr Campbell (son of Lord Cawdor and nephew of Lord Morpeth) brought in a Bill containing *only* the Land Tax part. The Lowthers mustered all their strength to throw it out, and Sir James Graham, formerly Lord Lowther's attorney, opened the debate against it. Even Lord Lowther said a few words. All the Lonsdale Members voted—and it was quite clear, as Sir Samuel Romilly remarked, that the only reason of its being now opposed was, that the Westmorland Contest had begun *since* last Session, and that the Lowther party thought they had their votes better registered than Mr. Brougham's were. It is to be observed, that the utmost effect of this manœuvre, to which the Ministers lent themselves, was to put the Independent party to a little expence in redeeming the Land Tax; for it is certain that not one vote will be lost by it.

Kendal Chronicle, May 9, 1818.

* * * *All Freeholders in the interest of Mr. Brougham are entreated to redeem the Land Tax upon their Freeholdes, to prevent any trouble that their opponents may wish to put them to upon the day of Election.*

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